

REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are currently pending in the subject application, and are presently under consideration. Claims 25-30 are allowed. Claims 1-5, 14-16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 31-33 and 38-43 are rejected. Claims 10-13, 17, 20-22 and 34-37 have been indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. New claims 44-46 have been added. Favorable reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the amendments and comments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Helot (U.S. Patent No. 6,231,371) (hereinafter "Helot"). Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

Regarding claims 1, 23, 31, and 42, Helot does not disclose a cable with a first end connected to the port on the computer and a second end connected to the port on the docking station. As set forth in Helot, the docking station 10 includes a docking connector 21 that mates with a compatible docking connector (not shown) on the back of a notebook computer 12. (See column 4, lines 45-56). Helot clearly discloses connectors on the computer and docking station that connect directly together without a cable.

According to the present invention, as recited in claims 1, 23, 31, and 42, the cable 16 allows the docking station 14 to be located remotely from the computer 12. (See the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 26 of the specification). Helot does not teach this functionality. For these reasons, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 23, 31, and 42 and dependent claims 5-9, 15-16, 24, 32, 33, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Helot is respectfully requested.

Regarding claims 18 and 38, Helot does not disclose a docking station including a plurality of I/O ports and at least one module supported in the docking station, wherein the module is selectively connectable with one of the I/O ports to configure the module to

communicate through the station I/O port of the docking station. In Helot, the docking station 10 replicates the ports on the computer 12. (See column 2, lines 47-58). As set forth in Helot, the docking connector 21 on the front of the docking station 16 is electrically coupled with the connectors 22, 24, 26, 28, and 30 on the back of the docking station. Helot does not disclose any modules mounted in the docking station 10. Clearly, in Helot, the docking connector 21 is electrically connected with the connectors 22, 24, 26, 28, and 30, e.g., via wires, to allow the computer 12 to communicate with external devices via the ports on the back of the docking station. In Helot, there are no modules in the docking station that communicate via the docking station I/O ports.

According to the present invention, as recited in claims 18 and 38, the modules are supported in the docking station and are selectively connectable to the I/O ports of the docking station. This allows the docking station, and the modules supported therein, to be configured for communication via a selected one of various different I/O ports. (See the paragraph beginning on page 19, line 14 of the specification). Helot does not teach this structure or function. For these reasons, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 18, and 38 and dependent claims 19, 39, and 40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Helot is respectfully requested.

For the reasons described above, claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 should be patentable over Helot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Yin, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,683,786) (hereinafter "Yin"). Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

It is respectfully submitted that Examiner's characterization of Yin is incorrect. In the Office Action, Examiner cites item 31 as a first port on a computer and item 32 as a second port on the docking station. As clearly set forth in Yin, however, items 31 and 32 illustrate different

positions to which a single port 30 on the docking station 10 can be moved. (See column 3, lines 12-17). Nevertheless, the rejection of claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Yin is addressed below.

Regarding claims 1, 23, 31, and 42, Yin does not disclose a cable with a first end connected to the port on the computer and a second end connected to the port on the docking station. As set forth in Yin, the docking station 10 includes an electrical interface 30 that mates with a corresponding electrical interface of the portable computer 12. (See column 3, lines 1-4). Yin clearly discloses connectors on the computer and docking station that connect directly together without a cable that has a first end connected to the computer port and a second end connected to the docking station port. (See, for example, Figs. 2A and 2B).

According to the present invention, as recited in claims 1, 23, 31, and 42, the cable 16 allows the docking station 14 to be located remotely from the computer 12. (See the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 26 of the specification). Yin does not teach this functionality. For these reasons, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 23, 31, and 42 and dependent claims 5-9, 15-16, 24, 32, 33, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Yin is respectfully requested.

Regarding claims 18 and 38, Yin does not disclose a docking station including a plurality of I/O ports and at least one module supported in the docking station, wherein the module is selectively connectable with one of the I/O ports to configure the module to communicate through the station I/O port of the docking station. In Yin, the docking station 10 replicates the ports on the portable computer 12. (See column 2, lines 47-62). As shown in Figs. 2A and 2B of Yin, the docking connector electrical interface 30 is connected to the second electrical interface 38 by a circuit 50 including a flexible wire 54, such as a ribbon cable. Yin does not disclose any modules, mounted in the docking station 10, that communicate via either of the electrical interfaces 30 and 38.

According to the present invention, as recited in claims 18 and 38, the modules are supported in the docking station and are selectively connectable to the I/O ports of the docking station. This allows the docking station, and the modules supported therein, to be configured for

communication via a selected one of various different I/O ports. (See the paragraph beginning on page 19, line 14 of the specification). Yin does not teach this structure or function. For these reasons, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 18, and 38 and dependent claims 19, 39, and 40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Yin is respectfully requested.

For the reasons described above, claims 1, 5-9, 15-16, 18-19, 23-24, 31-33, 38-40 and 42-43 should be patentable over Yin. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claims 2-4, 14 and 41 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2-4, 14 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Helot in view of Helot, et al. (U.S. Patent 6,331,934) (hereinafter Helot et al.). Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons. As set forth above in section I, Helot does not disclose the limitations of claims 1 and 40. Therefore, claims 2-4 and 14, depending from claim 1, and claim 41, depending from claim 40, are allowable as depending from an allowable claim.

IV. New Claims 44-46

New claims 44-46 each recite a plurality of modules that form a module stack mountable in the docking station, wherein the modules in the module stack are interconnected to form a communication bus for providing communications between the modules. On page 6 of the Office Action, these features were indicated as being allowable subject matter. Therefore, allowance of new claims 44-46 is respectfully requested.

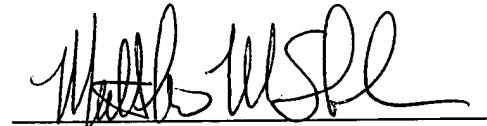
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and that the application be passed to issue.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,

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